

‘Crib Sheet’: Tips for parents, grandparents and babysitters on ways to reduce the risk of food poisoning in households with small children.

Breast Milk

Breast milk and prepared formula must be refrigerated at 40 °F or below. Use an appliance thermometer to be sure your refrigerator is cold enough.



- Disposable bottle liners or other plastic bags not intended for breast milk storage should never be used to store breast milk.
- Pumped breast milk should be stored in clean glass or hard BPA-free plastic bottles with tight-fitting lids. Mothers can also use milk storage bags which are made specifically for freezing human milk.
- When freezing, put the date on breast milk. Thaw and use the frozen breast milk in date order.
- Use thawed breast milk within 24 hours. Do not re-freeze thawed breast milk.
- Breast milk should be labeled with the date it was pumped. Pumped breast milk does not necessarily need to be warmed before giving it to the baby.
- Never put a bottle or bag of breast milk in the microwave.

Table 1. Guide to storing fresh breast milk

Place	Temperature	How long
Counter top, table	Room temp (60 °F – 85 °F)	No more than 3-4 hours
Small cooler with a blue ice pack	50 °F	24 hours
Refrigerator	40 °F or colder	No more than 48 hours
Freezer	0 °F or colder	No more than 6 months

Table 2. Guide to storing thawed breast milk

	Room temperature (60 °F to 85 °F)	Refrigerator (40 °F or colder)	Freezers
Thawed breast milk	No more than 1-2 hours	24 hours	Do not re-freeze